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THE GULL

MONTHLY BULLETIN

Volume 53 Berkeley, Calif. December 1971 Number 12

Virginia Rail—photographed at Coyote Hills Regional Park, May 23, by Nick Story, Berkeley, California.

DECEMBER MEETNG - - BIRDS OF RHODESIA

A slide show on the birds of Rhodesia will be presented at December's GGAS general mecting by Peter Ward, who is presently a graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley. Mr. Ward lived in Rhodesia for ten years, during which time he studied and photographed many of the country's birds, among which are the Honey Guide, Black Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Egyptian Goose, Sacred Ibis, and the tiny (3") Malachite Kingfisher. Mr. Ward will devote special attention to the beautiful Carmine Bee Eater, which is his favorite, and the Red-billed Quelea, a Ploceid that has destroyed many of Rhodesia's crops. Finaly, Mr. Ward will discuss ecological problems in Rhodesia, particular those resulting from dam construction. He is now working on a Ph.D. in civil engineering at Berkeley, specializing in problems of water resources and estuary pollution. For those who plan to go to Africa or some day want to, or who simply enjoy exotic birds, this program should be especially interesting. This meeting will be held **December 9** at **7:30 p.m.** in the **Hall of Flowers** in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.

CANYON RANCH ACQUIRES NEW PROPERTY

Audubon Canyon Ranch recently announced that Cypress Point, a nine-acre parcel of land on Tomales Bay just north of Marshall, will eventually be turned over to it for use as a wildlife refuge and center for nature education. This future gift to the ranch includes a find stand of Monterey Cypress, tidelands, a salt pond and a fresh water pond. A cluster of Victorian cottages on the property will be used for housing students, and a larger building will be used for classrooms, dining room, and administrative center.

A colony of Black-crowned Night Herons roosts in the cypress trees, and many shorebirds and waterfowl inhabit the adjacent tidelands and bay. Seals and sealions have been observed in the area, along with the many other birds and animals that frequent Tomales Bay.

In addition, Canyon Ranch has purchased 42 acres of Tomales Bay shoreline to supplement the Cypress Point property. This acreage is divided into six parcels, two of which are adjacent to Cypress Point. Others border parts of the east shore of the Bay between Bivalve and Blake's Landing. These parcels were purchased from Oscar and Edward Johansson who once used them for oyster farming. The Johanssons want the land preserved permanently as open space.

Audubon Canyon Ranch derives its funds for maintenance, salaries, and land acquisition chiefly from the once-a-year letter that went out last month. Audubon members are urged to give as generously as they can for two reasons: (1) because for every $100 ARC receives, it will be given $50 in matching funds, up to $35,000, by the Chrles E. Merrill Trust, and (2) because the Ranch is anxious to pay off the debts it still

owes on its Bolinas property so that it can continue with its important, newly initiated policy of acquiring Tomales Bay tidelands.

It is chiefly because of Canyon Ranch that the Bolinas Basin is out of jeopardy. The ranch's new program is now giving unity and direction to efforts to save Tomales Bay. It deserves our help.

HELP SAVE JUGHANDLE CREEK PYGMY FOREST

Inclosed in this issue of *The Gull* is a brochure published by the California Institute of Man in Nature, which is working with the Nature Conservancy to purchase the Jughandle Creek Ecological Staircase. Contributions toward this purchase will be greatly appreciated.

Jughandle Creek flows into the ocean a few miles north of Mendocino California. The staircase consists of a succession of marine terraces, each with its unique plant association. The third terrace contains a fine example of the Mendocino pygmy forest where mature Mendocino Cypresses may only reach three feet in height. This miniaturization is caused by an adverse soil condition characterized by high acidity. Such soils — known as podsols — are extremely rare, the Mendocino coast being one of the few places where they are found. Your donation will help future generations enjoy this unique natural phenomenon.

OAKLAND MUSEUM PROGRAMS FOR DECEMBER

On Friday, December 17, at 8 p.m., the Oakland Adventure Club will present "The Wildlife of the Grand Tetons," a slide show and lecture by Jeff Tooth, a professional photographer and mountain climbing guide. This program will be held in the Museum Theater, 10th and Oak Streets, Oakland. Admission is free.

On Thursday, December 9, at 8 p.m., the third program in this year's Man and Nature series will be held in the Museum Theater. The provocative title of this program is "Sex and the Single Bark Beetle." A lecture and live beetles will be presented by Dr. Willam Bedland. Admission is free.

SPRING INSTITUTE TO FEATURE DESERT ECOLOGY

GGAS members who enjoy desert scenery and wildlife are invited to attend the Audubon Institute of Desert Ecology, to be held in Tucson on two consecutive three-day weekends: April 21, 22, 23 and April 28, 29, 30, 1972. This program is sponsored by the Tucson Audubon Society and the University of Arizona. Its purpose is "to enrich and increase one's knowledge and appreciation of the desert environment." The program will consist of morning and afternoon field trips and evening discussions. The enrollment fee is $45.00 per person, not including the cost of food and lodging. Further information on the institute may be obtained by writing to: Audubon Institute of Desert Ecology, 2504 East Lee, Tucson, Arizona 85716 (Tel. 602 325-7692).

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Palo Alto Salt Marsh (October 17) —About twenty-eight people met at the duck pond at 9 a.m. to enjoy some warm fall weather and a variety of marsh and water birds. Fifty species were observed, including 7 species of gulls, 500 Double-crested Cormorants, at least one male Blue-winged Teal and several White-tailed Kites. An American Bittern and a Short-eared Owl were seen in the afternoon at the Flood Control Basin. — Ted Chandik, *Leader*

Elkhorn Slough (October 9) — Despite a chilly fog, fifteen people spent the day birding at Elkhorn Slough, the Coast Guard pier in Monterey and Point Lobos. Among the species seen were Northern Phalaropes, Wandering Tattlers, five Ruddy Turnstones, 12 Black Oystercatchers, and a Sora Rail. — George Peyton, *Leader*

Monterey Boat Trip (October 10) — Despite heavy fog and red tide, birders saw many species of pelagic birds. The Shearwaters were mostly gone by this time, but there were huge rafts of both Ashy and Black Petrels. Participants enjoyed close views of Tufted Puffins, Cassin's Aukelets, and Xantus' Murrelets. Other species incuded Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers, Northern and Red Phalaropes, Fulmar (both light and dark phases), and Common Murres. — Alan Baldridge, Pres., Monterey Peninsula Audubon, *Leader*

Two weeks prior to the GGAS pelagic trip, Mrs Valeria DaCosta, a GGAS member, led a similar trip sponsored by California Field Ornithologists. Her report follows:

Eighty-six birders, representing most of California's Audubon Society branches, and 10 eastern visitors took this popular trip. Among the many highlights were large flocks of New Zealand Shearwaters. One raft of about 200 birds was found just 20 yards off the bow of one of the boats. We also saw numerous Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters. Several people also saw a Manx Shearwater. Pomarine and Parasitc Jaegers were present throughout the day. We also had excellent views of Skuas, three of which, all in different plumages (including a light phase), repeatedly flew across the bows of the boats and even alighted on the water beside them. Among the Alcids were Common Murres, Pigeon Guillemots, Cassin's and Rhinoceros Aukelets, and several Xantus' Murrelets. Due to circumstances beyond our control, many people were unable to get reservations for this trip. For this we are sorry. — Valeria DaCosta, **Leader**

FIELD TRIPS FOR DECEMBER

Sunday, December 5 — Conn Dam in Napa County. Drive to Napa. Turn off Highway 29 at the Trancas exit. Drive east on Trancas for about a mile to where it intersects the Silverado Trail. Meet at the bridge near this intersection at **8:30 a.m.** We will bird for ½ hour. The Caravan will leave for Conn Dam at **9 a.m.** sharp. Leader, Larry Curl.

Thursday, December 9 — Rodeo Lagoon. Cross the Golden Gate Bridge; take the Sausalito turn-off at the north end of the bridge; turn left at ⅛

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Man in Nature

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graphics: Christopher Carroll

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PYGMY FOREST

on Jughandle Creek

a home for elves?

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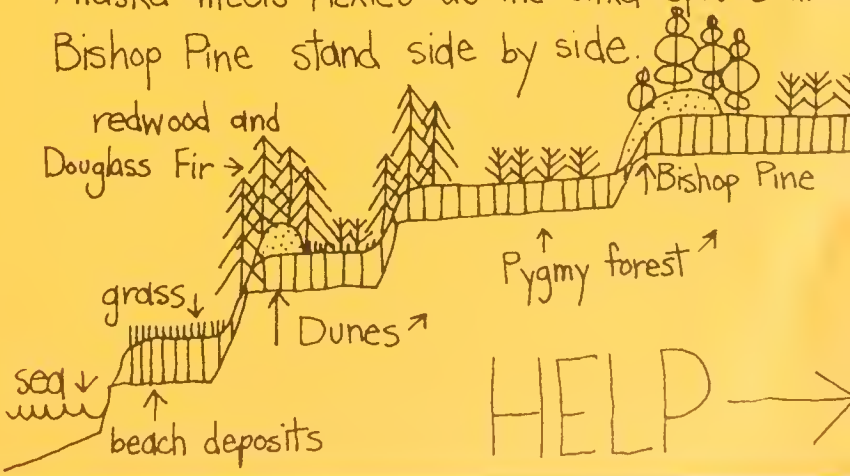
NO — On a section of the Mendocino Coast a forest of dwarf trees grows on terraces out by the sea. Five level terraces climb the coastal scarp in 100 foot steps from the ocean's edge. Each succeeding terrace is 100,000 years older than the one below it. In the Jughandle Creek stream bottom, below the youngest terrace, Alaska meets Mexico as the Sitka Spruce and Bishop Pine stand side by side.



HELP →

The California Institute of Man in Nature, working with the Nature Conservancy, is purchasing for preservation the Sea Terrace Ecosystem, the coastal terminus for the Jughandle Creek Ecological Staircase. This small section of Northern California coast is one of the world's most unique living museums.

Without your help:

Your gift today can save a part of the Pygmy Forest. The life remains in the million year old Mendocino landscape and will keep on giving generation after generation.

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of a mile and go though the tunnel. Meet in the parking lot at the other end at **9 a.m.** Bring lunch and friends. Leader Mrs. Hubert Fry.

Saturday, December 11 — Bodega Bay. Meet at **8:30 a.m.** at the first parking lot inside the Doran Park entrance just south of the town of Bodega Bay. Be prepared with two quarters to go through the gate. We will bird on Doran Peninsula, Bodega Lagoon, Bodega Head, and the Salmon Creek Ponds. Bring lunch, scopes, warm clothing and friends. Leader, Baron McLean of Santa Rosa.

Dates to hold: December 18, 19, 26 and **January 2** for *Christmas Counts;* **January 15** for *Dillon's Beach;* **January 29-30** for *Los Banos;* **February 13** for a bus trip to *Thornton;* **February 19** for *Grizzly* and *Joice Islands.* — PATRICIA TRGGS, *Field Trips Chairman*

BIRDING CALENDAR

This month's Birding Calendar is culled from past issues of *The Gull* dating back to 1959. The species listed below are either known to be presently at the places indicated or have been observed there in the past .

MARIN LAKES (north slopes of Mt. Tamalpais) — Ameriean and Hooded Mergansers, Wood Ducks (Lake Lagunitas — eary morning and dusk), Common Loon (Alpine), Pileated Woodpeeker (two in vieinity of Lake Lagunitas), Osprey (mornings, in swampy area between Bon Tempe Dam and Alpine Lake), and a variety of land birds.

LAKE MERRIT, OAKLAND — Barrow's and Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Greater and Lesser Seaup, Canvasback, Ruddy Dueks, Mallards, Coots, Eared and Horned Grebes, Double-erested Cormorants, and zillions of coots. For beginners who want good close looks at ducks, Lake Merritt can't be beat.

CONN LAKE, NAPA COUNTY—Exeellent spot for both water and land birds. Wood Ducks are almost always there, and Whistling Swans have been seen in the past.

BODEGA BAY —Numerous ducks and shore birds. Black Oystercatchers ean be seen from Bodega Head. Rock Sandpipers have been seen here before. Also, look for Ferruginous Hawks. Bodega Bay is one of those uniquely rieh areas where almost anything may show up. It makes for exciting birding.

Other paces to go: ALAMEDA SOUTH SHORE, SAN LEANDRO BAY, EMERYVILLE SHORELINE, BERKELEY AQUATIC PARK, ALBANY-RICHMOND SHORELINE, COYOTE HILLS, PALO ALTO SALT MARSH, GOLDEN GATE PARK, RODEO LAGOON, BOLINAS LAGOON,POINT REYES, SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA.

A note on the weather: according to experts, this winter will be colder than usual. As a result, we *may* see more of those species that normally winter farther north or at higher elevations. Two immature Northern Shrikes have already been seen (see Observations).

Finally, December is Christmas Count Time. If you wish to participate in any of the local counts, eontact either the persons listed below or one of the officers of the chapter eonducting the count.

Point Reyes count, December 19 — Jack Guggolz, Compiler (234-4298)

Western Sonoma count, December 18 — Baron McLean, Compiler (707 548-0851)

Oakland (GGAS) count, January 2 — Garth Alton, Compiler (254-5357)

Hayward-Fremont count, January 2 — John Luther, Compiler (339-0986)

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Red-necked Grebes, Oet. 2, six (two in breeding plumage) at Pigeon Point — FN, LN.

Blue-footed Boobies, late Sept., six on Puddingstone Reservoir, Pomona — VDaC, RDaC; nearly 100 sightings in 29 localities (August-Sept.) from Salton Sea to Avila Beach — L.A. Audubon bulletin.

Blue-winged Teal, Oct. 26, Palo Alto salt marsh.

European Widgeon, Oct. 23, Tule Lake refuge — GP, JV; Nov. 3, Palo Alto Yacht Harbor — RDaC, VDaC.

Barrow's Goldeneye, Oct. 31, Four at Lake Merritt—MJG.

Rough-legged Hawk, Oct. 8, near Lake Hennessey, Napa Co.—FN,LN

Osprey, Oct. 21, over Rodeo Lagoon — BP.

Pigeon Hawk, Oct. 21, Rodeo Lagoon—BP.

Clapper Rails, early Oct., twelve at Alameda South Shore —ER.

Virginia Rail, early Oct. Alameda South Shore —ER.

Gallinules, Oct. 21, two at Rodeo Lagoon —BP

Pectoral Sandpiper, Oct. 2, Pescadero pond; Oct. 10, Rodeo Lagoon — FN, LN.

Marbled Murrelet in breeding plumage, Oct. 2, Pigeon Point —FN, LN.

Short-eared Owls, Oct. 31, four at Emeryville waterfront — JM.

Yellow-shafted Flicker, Oct. 21, Rodeo Lagoon —BP.

Lewis' Woodpeckers, Sept. 14, two at Alamo — JR; Oet. 11, Briones Reg. Park — LC; Oct. 21, Coyote Hills Reg. Park —MA.

Tropical Kingbird, Oct. 11, Rodeo Lagoon —BP.

Dipper, Sept. 18, Jewel Lake, Tilden Park — ES; Oct. 16, in creek at Glen Ellen — FN, LN; Oet. 23, two in Sunol Valley Reg. Park (GGAS trip) — LJ.

Northern Shrike, immature plumage, Oct. 25, Drake's Estero Trail, Pt. Reyes — SW; Oct. 26, Palo Alto salt marsh trail — LC, BP.

Blue-winged Warbler (two white wing-bars, white under-tail coverts), Sept. 25, Crespi Pond, Pacific Grove — VDaC.

Nashville Warbler Oct. 3, San Franeisco garden — AF.

Palm Warbler, Oct. 16, near Crespi pond, Paeifica Grove — GM

Northern Waterthrush Oct. 16, Crespi pond, Pacifica Grove — VH.

Kentucky Warbler, last week of Sept., Morro Bay — VDaC, RDaC.

MacGillivray's Warbler, Oct. 3, San Francisco garden — AF.

Dickcissel, Oct. 11 and 13, with House Sparrows at Marineland, Palos Verdes Peninsula —VH.

White-throated Sparrow, Oct. 25 at Jerry Brady's Inverness Motel; Oct. 26, in San Franciseo garden for the 4th year — AF; Oct. 29, San Rafael garden — BP.

Correction for November Gull: The May 14th observation of the *White Ibis* was the first reeord for *Northern* California.

Contributors: Mike Althouse (MA), Larry Curl (LC), Robert DaCosta (RDaC), Valeria DaCosta (VDaC), Ann Follis (AF), Mary Jane Green (MJG), Lenore Johnsen (LJ), Dr. Gerald Maisel (GM), Joseph Morlan (JM), Fran Nelson (FN), Leroy Nelson (LN), George Peyton (GP), Bill Pursell (BP), Jean Richmond (JR), Elsie Roemer (ER), Edward Sehafer (ES), John Voekel (JV), Steve Witney (SW). — VI HOMEN, *Observation Editor,* 6911 Armour Rd., Oakland, CA 94611 (339-1886).

WATCH FOR GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULLS!

The Portland Audubon Society reports the following from John Ward of the University of British Columbia:

"This past summer on Mandarte Island we put colour bands on 55 adult Glaueous-winged Gulls. Eaeh of these adults has an individual colour band combination (e.g. red over blue over aluminum band on right leg; red over aluminum band on left leg.) This summer we also wing-tagged 150 juvenile gulls with strong red and blue vinyl tags, and hopefully if the tags last we will be able to learn something about the wanderings of these birds in the 4 or 5 years before they breed. These birds also have eolour bands on the legs, whieh will enable you to identify the birds even if the letters or numbers on the tag are partially obseured by feathers. About 900 juvenile gulls have aluminum bands only, on which the numbers run up and down, making the reading of these bands fairly easy with seope or binoeulars."

Plcase report observations of these gulls to the Field Notes Editor, Portland Audubon Soeiety, 5151 N.W. Cornell Rd. Portland Ore. 97210.

NEW NATIONAL PARK GUIDE

The National Park Serviee has published a new guide to the remote areas of 41 national parks. Entitled "Baek Country in the National Park System," the poeket guide ineludes detailed descriptions of the areas, camping faeility information, and Park Serviee rules. It may be ordered for 35 ccnts from the Superintendant of Doeuments, U.S. Printing Office Washington, D.C. 20402. Inelude the stock number, 2405-02-67, with your order.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

A gift of remembrance was madc to Audubon Canyon Ranch:

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A gift of remembranee was made to Audubon Nature Training:

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Canyon Ranch Film Chmn.	Mrs. Bonnie Smith	555 Dewey Blvd., San Francisco 94116	681-7635

GGAS delegates to Bay Area Audubon Council (BAAC):
Joshua Barkin, George Peyton, Jr., Mrs. Richard F. Johnson (addresses above)

Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL* Monthly meetings second Thursday 7:30 p.m. Joint membership,—Local & National $12 per year, (individual); $15 (family); includes *AUDUBON MAGAZINE* and *THE GULL*. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately $2 per year.

High school & college student membership $6 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.